

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 196 without my signature.

While I share the author's concern about the significant strain being placed on our emergency room network in California, I cannot support a bill that would mandate a hospital to maintain specific services when those services are not a requirement of licensure. Forcing hospitals to keep an emergency room open, especially when they are closing because of financial circumstances, will only jeopardize patient care due to the rapid attrition of medical and nursing staff, as well as suppliers.

For this reason, I am unable to sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger